

Chirton and Conock

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

May 2017

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1. Parish Summary

The parish of Chirton & Conock is in the Pewsey Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

According to the 2011 Census, the population was 406, comprising 171 inhabited dwellings. Over the last twenty years Chirton has grown by some 60 houses. The majority are detached and semi-detached. There is also a small development of some 14 houses originally built in 1951 for the local district council.

The parish is near the centre of Wiltshire, just off the A342 Andover Road, 5 miles from Devizes and 3.5 miles from Upavon. It lies about 1 mile from the north scarp slope of Salisbury Plain (military training area) set on the southern edge of the Vale of Pewsey and to the North, is bordered by the River Avon.

Chirton is within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Formerly known as 'Cherrington' until the 20th century and is closely associated with Conock in the parish to the west. The majority of the village is designated as a 'Conservation Area' with an area in the central part additionally designated as an area of 'Minimum Change'.

In the centre of the village is the Parish Church (consecrated on St. John the Baptist's day 1170) and Chirton Pre & Primary schools, teaching 3 to 11 year olds. The secondary schools of Lavington and Devizes are reached by coach or bus and are both approximately five miles away.

There is a bus stop in the village and the number 101 bus goes from Devizes to Pewsey from Monday to Saturday. The mobile library stops in the village once a month.

Chirton used to support The Wiltshire Yeoman Public House, a village shop and Post Office, a bakery, a garage and blacksmiths but over time these have all become unviable businesses and the village now just has the Pre & Primary school, Church and Parish Hall (currently in a state of disrepair).

2. Introduction

In January 2017, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Chirton and Conock Parish Council, to establish if there was a proven need for affordable housing in the parish and potentially to use the findings of the survey to inform the parish plan.

Such surveys assist officers in identifying those areas with the greatest housing problems so that scarce financial resources can be put to best use.

Experience has shown that these surveys need to be carried out at regular intervals if the results are to remain relevant in identifying trends.

- The Principal Development Officers are employed by Wiltshire Council's Service Development and Enabling Team to assist in the delivery of new affordable housing.
- The Principal Development Officers work closely with rural communities, housing associations, local authorities and landowners to meet the affordable housing needs of rural communities.
- The survey is funded by members of the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership (WRIP).¹
- 'The Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership brings together representatives from the economic development, regeneration, spatial planning, service development and enabling teams of Wiltshire Council together with Registered Provider [housing association] partners and the Homes and Communities Agency to enable and promote the sustainable delivery of new build housing in the rural communities of Wiltshire.'²

3. Aim

The aim of carrying out the survey is to investigate the affordable housing needs of local people (or those who need to live in the parish) in Chirton and Conock parish.

- 'Housing need' can be defined as the need for an individual or household to obtain housing that is suitable to their circumstances.
- It implies that there are problems or limitations with the household's current housing arrangements and that the household is unable to afford or to access suitable accommodation in the private sector.
- Such problems may be concerned with housing costs, size, location, layout, state of repair, or security of tenure either immediately or in the future.

4. Survey Distribution and Methodology

In order to carry out the housing needs survey, questionnaires were delivered to the Parish Council for distribution on the 2nd March 2017.

To encourage a good response, households were given a pre-paid envelope in which to return the completed survey. The council applies the data protection policy to responses, ensuring that all survey responses remain anonymous.

Residents were asked to return the completed surveys in the pre-paid envelopes by 31st March 2017. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Service Development Officers at Wiltshire Council.

¹ The members of WRIP that contribute to the survey funding are Wiltshire Council and six Registered Providers of social housing (housing associations) - Aster, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing and Wiltshire Rural Housing Association.

² Para 1.1, 'Purpose', *Terms of Reference for the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership*. Full WRIP membership: Wiltshire Council, Aster, Wiltshire Rural Housing Association, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the Wiltshire Community Land Trust.

- A total of 177 questionnaires were distributed to the parish.
- Everyone was asked to complete the first section of the form.
- If a household considered itself in need, or likely to be in need, of affordable housing within the next five years, it was invited to complete the rest of the survey.
- There was a good response rate of 35% with 62 replies received.
- This report describes the views only of the residents who returned the questionnaires and these views may not be representative of the wider population of Chirton and Conock.
- No responses were made online.

5. Key Findings

This report is divided into two parts. The first section looks at existing households in the parish in order to provide a description of the current housing in Chirton and Conock. This section also describes the levels of new housing, if any, which would be supported by respondents to the survey.

The second section examines the households who have declared a need for new housing in Chirton and Conock. The section begins by describing the overall need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment is then made in order to determine the numbers of households who have a current need for new affordable housing. The results of this assessment are summarised in the recommendations of the report (Section 8).

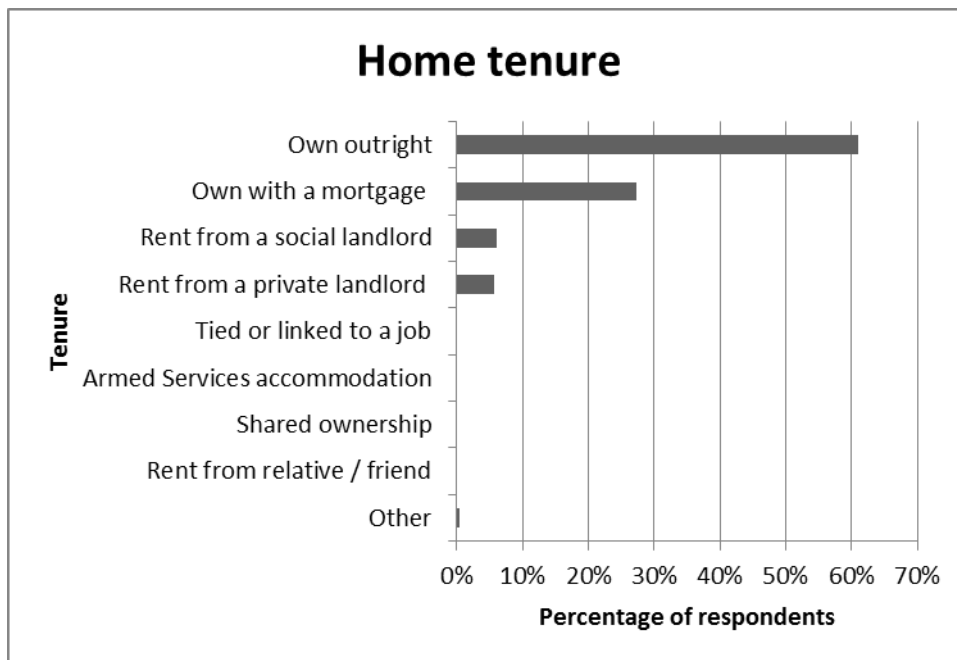
Part One – Households currently living in the parish

The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Chirton and Conock was their main home. 100% of those who replied said that it was.

The 2011 Census data for Chirton and Conock indicates that 68.6% of households in the parish were owner-occupying, 17.6% were renting from social landlords, 11.9% were privately renting and 1.3% of households were living rent free.³

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (88.3%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 6.1% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 5.2% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency, none were living in accommodation tied to their employment, and 0.5% were living in a tenure described as 'other'. These results indicate a bias in the survey responses toward those living in owner-occupied homes and the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.

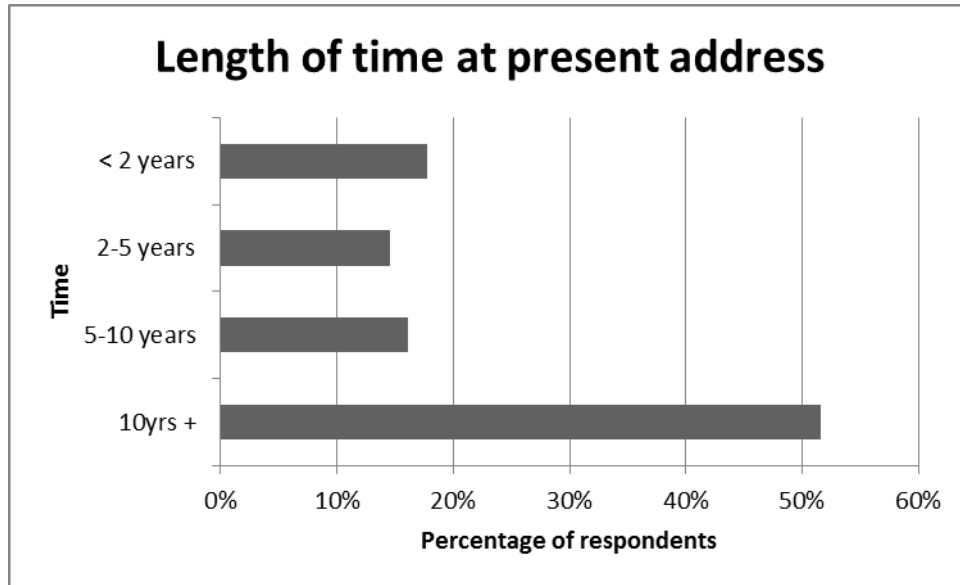
Chart 1



³ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

The chart below indicates the length of time that respondents have lived in their current home. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than ten years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents:

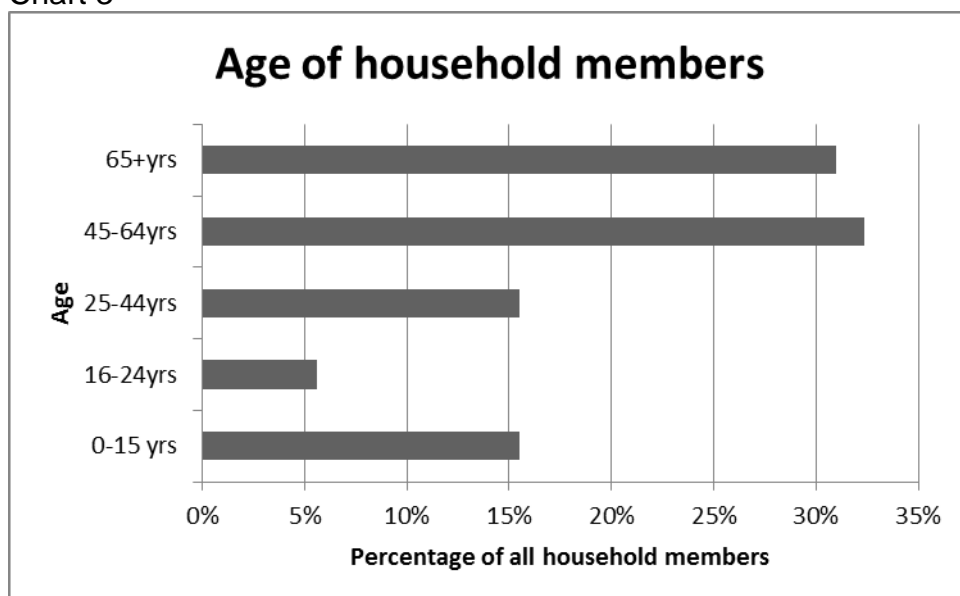
Chart 2



Many respondents to the survey lived in large family homes, with 9.7% of respondents having five or more bedrooms in their property. 35.5% lived in four bedroom homes, 41.9% had three bedrooms, 9.7% two bedrooms and 3.2% of respondents lived in homes with one bedroom.

The spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that around a third (31%) of respondents' household members were aged 65+ and another third (32.4%) are aged 45 - 64:

Chart 3



As shown in the chart above, there were significant numbers of households responding to the survey with members aged 25-65+ and with children aged under 16. This indicates a spread of different household types in Chirton and Conock, from older person households with fewer members, to younger households with children.

The distance travelled to work can also be a good measure of the sustainability of local housing development, as more people working locally can indicate an ongoing need for local housing. The table below shows how far people in the respondents' households travelled to work:

Table 1

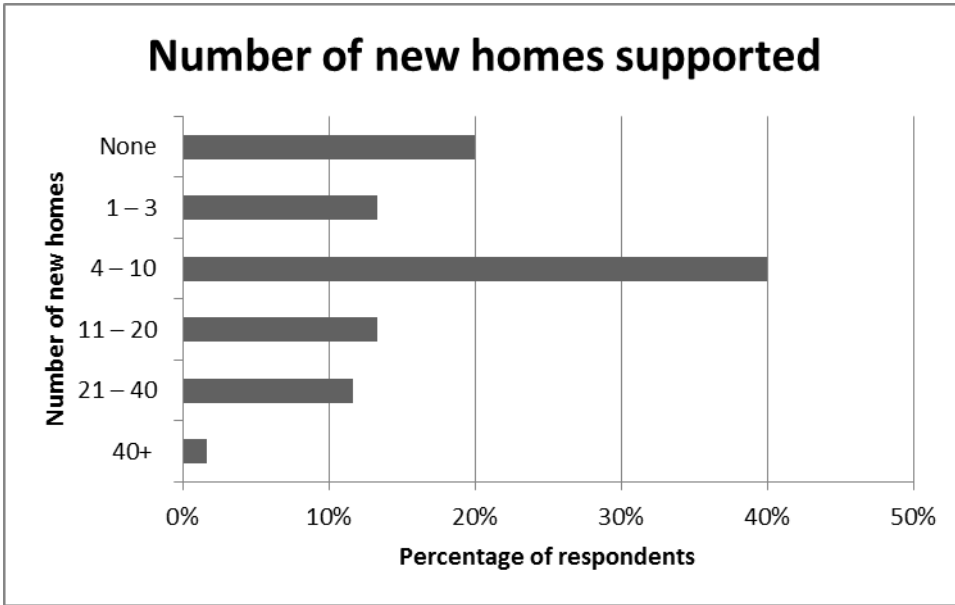
Q9	Distance to work				
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	Total
Person 1	9	17	9	5	40
Person 2	4	10	4	1	19
Person 3	1	1	0	0	2
Person 4	0	0	0	0	0
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	28	13	6	61

These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Chirton and Conock, indicated by the survey respondents' access to local sources of employment. While 68.9% of the households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, 31.1% travel more than that, suggesting a potential lack of more local sources of employment.

Respondents were also asked whether anyone currently living in their household would need separate accommodation in the parish now or in the near future, to which 5% of respondents (three households) answered 'yes', indicating a low level of sustained need for housing in the parish.

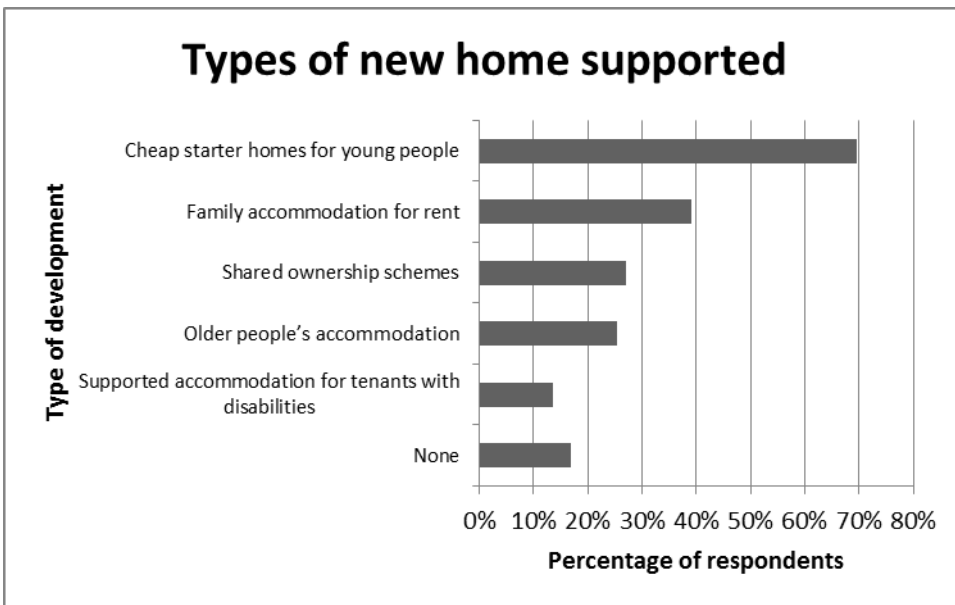
Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. A large majority of respondents (80%) were in support of some new housing in Chirton and Conock, with the most popular option (40% of respondents) being for between four and ten new homes. 20% of respondents were opposed to any new housing in Chirton and Conock parish:

Chart 4



Respondents to this section were finally asked what types of housing development, if any, they would support. The types of housing considered most needed in Chirton and Conock by the survey respondents were cheap starter homes for young people (69.5%) and Family accommodation for rent (39%). Full results are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

Chart 5



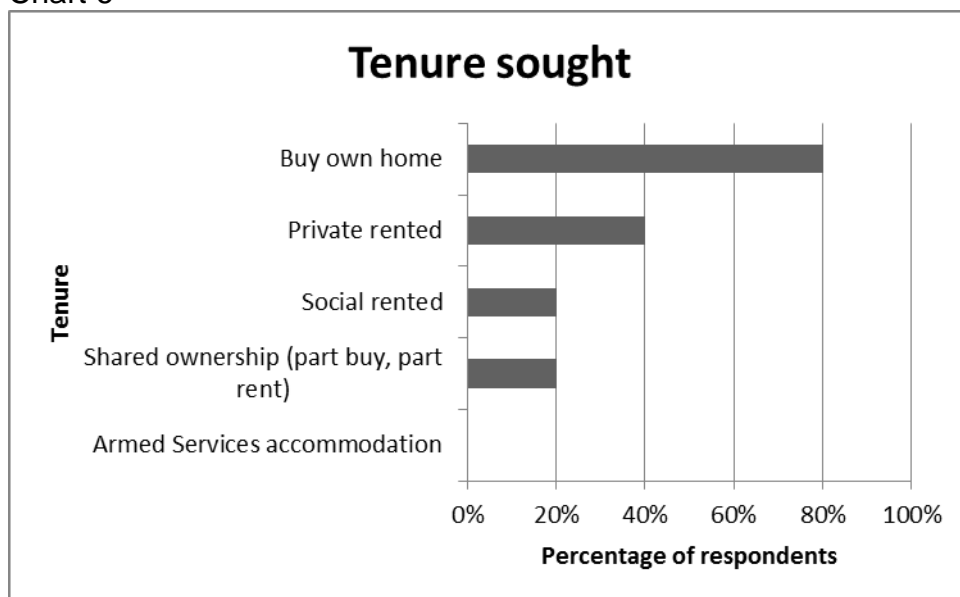
Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

This section of the report looks initially at all the responses to section two of the survey in order to give a broad picture of the need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment and an evaluation of the current affordable housing in Chirton and Conock are then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable (i.e. non-market) housing.

Five respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Chirton and Conock. The most frequent reasons given for needing to move were currently renting, wanting to buy (3 households).

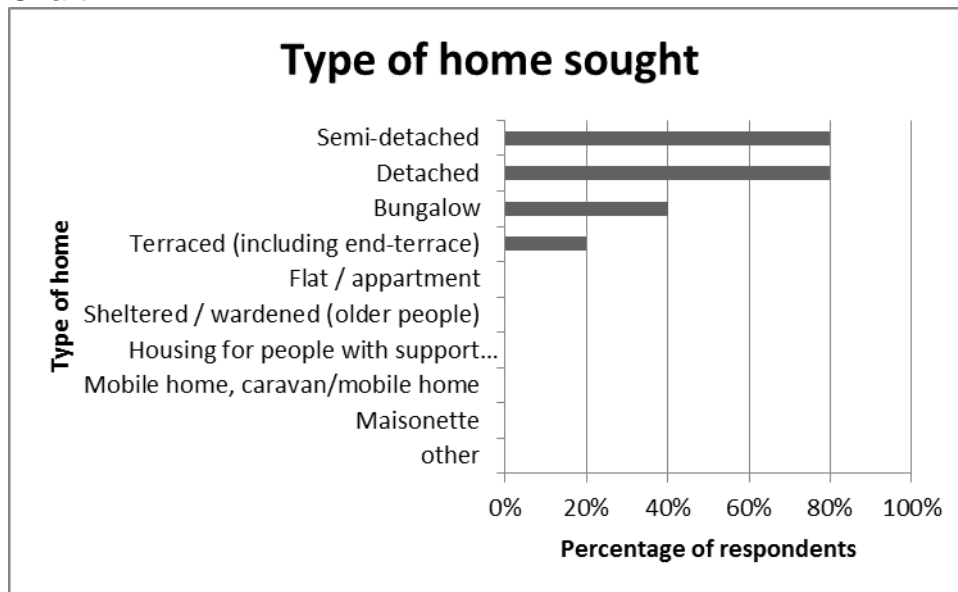
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with buying own home the most desired. Households could indicate more than one response:

Chart 6



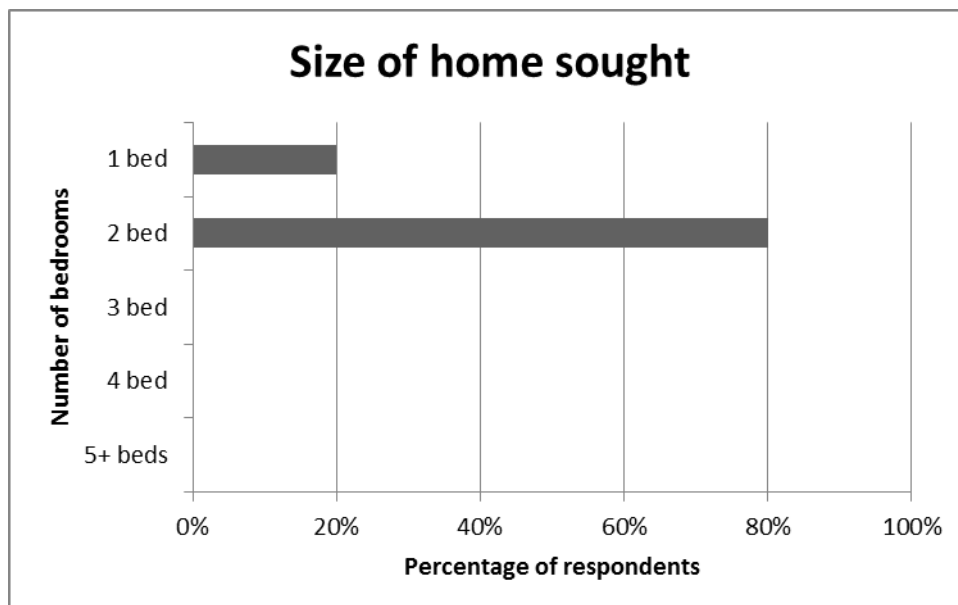
Respondents to this section were also asked what type of housing they required. The most sought-after types were detached and semi-detached properties. Full responses are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

Chart 7



In terms of size, the most popular option was for two bedroom homes and respondents also expressed a need for properties with one bedroom. No need was declared for homes with three or more bedrooms:

Chart 8



The respondents were then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in Chirton and Conock to meet their needs, to which all five households answered 'yes'.

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Chirton and Conock, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of respondents. Please note that due to the need to preserve the confidentiality of respondents, only a short summary of the financial assessment is presented below.

Only one of the households responding to this section of the survey reported having equity in an existing property, and the estimated levels of savings among the respondents were mixed. Income levels were also mixed. The median gross income bracket reported by the five respondents was £26,000-£27,499pa.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Chirton and Conock suggests that one of the five households would require public assistance in order to achieve their required housing and so would be considered 'in housing need' as defined in Section 3 of this report. This informs the recommendations of this survey for new affordable housing in Chirton and Conock, presented in Section 8.

Of the four remaining households, one did not provide sufficient consistent information in order for an analysis of housing need to be carried out, this household indicated a desire to purchase a home and open market purchase is probably affordable, this household is seeking a two bedroomed property, another specified that they would like to purchase a new, smaller, home and this would be affordable given the information provided, this household is seeking a two bedroomed property. The remaining two households are not considered to be in housing need and are considered to be adequately housed in their existing accommodation.

6. Affordability

In order to investigate affordability, further research has been carried out on house prices in the area.

It is possible to estimate the average property prices in the Chirton and Conock area:⁴

Bedrooms	May 2017
1	£148,900
2	£198,900
3	£270,300
4	£415,900
5+	£611,900

Example calculation for a mortgage

Typically, a household making a single application can obtain a mortgage of 3.5 times their annual income, or 3x annual income for joint applications. Households would generally expect to need a deposit of around 15% of the total price.

If an average two-bedroom property sold in Chirton and Conock cost £198,900 then a household may require £29,835 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £48,304 for a single applicant or £56,355 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in Wiltshire in 2015 was £21,467:⁵

- It would be unlikely that a household would be able to purchase a property in this parish without a large deposit, some equity in an existing property or a substantial income.
- First time buyers may struggle to meet the criteria necessary for obtaining their own home.
- In some cases intermediate housing (shared ownership or low cost market housing) would be a suitable option, whilst in other instances affordable rented accommodation would be appropriate.

⁴ House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN10 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SN10 postcode covers a wider area than Chirton and Conock parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

⁵ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2015, resident analysis. Gross annual pay of employed persons resident in Wiltshire, www.nomisweb.co.uk . Note that while the mortgage calculation refers to household income, i.e. to the combined income of all persons in the home, the ASHE figure refers to individual income.

7. Summary

This survey's recommendations (see Section 8 below) concentrate on those households who are unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

This is just a quarter of the research needed for this assessment: the Housing Register of Wiltshire Council, the local Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the advice from allocation staff who manage the Register must also be taken into account.

- In May 2017, there was one household on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Chirton and Conock parish: This household is not described in Section 8 of this report. This household is seeking a two bedroomed property, and any full assessment of housing need in the parish must take account of the Register.⁶
- The 2011 Census recorded twenty eight social homes in the parish.⁷ These properties represent 17.6% of the total housing in Chirton and Conock, which is higher than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.⁸
- The social housing in Chirton and Conock had a 0% re-let rate in the past year: from the first to the fourth quarter of 2016-17, no social homes were re-let in the parish.⁹
- The lack of turnover of social housing in the parish suggests that the household responding to section two of this survey and in need of affordable accommodation would not be able to meet their needs through accessing the existing social housing of the parish.

⁶ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

⁷ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, English parishes / Welsh communities.

⁸ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, local authorities in England and Wales.

⁹ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

8. Recommendations

This survey's recommendations concentrate on households unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

The following indicates the minimum need over the next three years for new affordable housing development in the parish, based on the responses to the survey. Please note that this report provides a description of the affordable housing need only of those who responded to the survey, and as such may underestimate the total affordable housing need in the parish. As described in Section 7, the survey is only a quarter of the evidence required to fully assess housing need in the parish. Wiltshire Council's Housing Register, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the advice of allocation staff who manage the Register **must** also be taken into account in properly determining local housing need.

Subsidised rented housing ¹⁰

None

Shared ownership / discount market homes¹¹

- 1 x two bedroom home

Sheltered housing for older people

- None

¹⁰ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in subsidised rented properties are where possible made in line with the 'family size' criteria implemented as part of the Housing Benefit changes by the 2012 Welfare Reform Act.

¹¹ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in shared ownership/discounted market properties are based on the number of bedrooms wanted by respondents, applicants can purchase the size of home they are able to afford.